

2nd Issue, 25 cent, Fr 1286, inverted "S"

OR

Milton # 2R25.3g

This note has always intrigued me – the inverted "S". letter reverse surcharge get inverted? Remember the Fr 1286 is issue 25-cent fractional currency note. All seven varieties have variety Fr 1286a with a slate colored back) and are (plain or fiber) and different reverse corner surcharge



How did only one letter of a three-one of seven varieties of the 2nd a purple back (there is an eighth differentiated by their paper type combinations.

Friedberg #	Reverse Corner Surcharges	Paper Type
Fr 1283	None	Plain
Fr 1284	"18 – 63"	Plain
Fr 1285	"18 – 63" & "A"	Plain
Fr 1286	"18 – 63" & "S"	Plain
Fr 1288	"18 – 63" & "2"	Plain
Fr 1289	"18 – 63" & "T – 1"	Fiber
Fr 1290	"18 – 63" & "T – 2"	Fiber

The reverse surcharges were applied after the printing of the notes took place. A sheet of notes would be stamped with a rubber surcharge plate that only had glue on it. Then the sheet would be dusted with the golden bronze powder, which would stick to the glued area. This method was used to apply the bronze oval to the face of all 2nd issue notes as well as the large double lined indicator of value and corner surcharges (if any) on the back of the notes. This bronze powder was used as a deterrent to counterfeiters who were attempting to photographically reproduce the notes for printing plates.

There are many different reverse corner surcharge combinations on 2nd and 3rd issue fractional, so for there to be only one variety with a surcharge plate error is remarkable. Whereas we don't know how many surcharge plates were made and/or used, we do know that only the 2nd issue 25-cent Fr 1286 can be found with a surcharge plate error. The 5 cent Fr 1234 and the 10 cent Fr 1246 which both have the "18-63" & "S" reverse surcharge are NOT known with an inverted "S". There is no 2nd issue 50-cent variety with an "S" used on a reverse surcharge. Additionally, no 3rd issue notes are known with an inverted "S". So there must not have been too many surcharge plates made in error. Given this, how rare is the Fr 1286 inverted "S"??

The first publication noting this variety is Matt Rother's *A Guide Book of United States Fractional Currency*. At the beginning of Chapter IV dealing with error notes, there is a photograph (page 63) of the Fr 1286 with the inverted "S". At the time of the printing of Milton R. Friedberg's (MRF) *The Encyclopedia of United States Fractional & Postal Currency*, there were two known, one owned by MRF and the other pedigreed back via American Auction Sale (11/16/73) of the Matt Rother Collection to the 1958 ANA Sale of the Burgett Collection. This note is the one plated in Rother's book on page 63 and has been determined from Rother's original handwritten manuscript. At the time of *The Encyclopedia's* publication (1978), there was no pedigree attached to the MRF note. In the Currency Auctions of America Sale (1/10/97) of the Milton R. Friedberg Collection, lot 792 (MRF's 2R25.3g) is pedigreed back to Abe Kosoff. Interesting to note that the two known examples of this error in 1978 were both handled by Abe Kosoff, one in his 1958 ANA auction and the other in private sale to MRF. Additionally, in the ANA sale description of lot 856, the cataloger notes that the owner of the 2R25.3g "knows of only one other such note". So two were known in 1958 and somewhere between then and 1997, Abe Kosoff bought it and sold it to MRF. Twenty years after the 1958 ANA sale, there were still only two known, but in the twenty some years since the 1978 *Encyclopedia* was published, a few more have surfaced.

In the CAA catalog description for MRF's 2R25.3g, the cataloger notes that there are probably four known. This would be interesting to determine. Since I have personally owned three of these notes, I am hoping that with some help from fellow FCCBers, we could get a more complete listing of all known 2R25.3g 's in existence. I would keep the list confidential if contributing parties state that to be their intent, however, if all parties were fine with non-confidentiality, I would share the pedigrees with the FCCB. In any case, we would at least get a read on how many exist and that I could publish without any names being released. So to that end, I look forward to receiving any and all information on Fr 1286 inverted "S" notes that anyone has. Thanks – Tom O'Mara
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